

**TO FILE A COMPLAINT OR COMMENDATION:**

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM  
ATTACH A STAMP AND PLACE IN THE MAIL

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: (DAY) \_\_\_\_\_ (EVENING) \_\_\_\_\_ (CELL) \_\_\_\_\_ (E-MAIL) \_\_\_\_\_

INCIDENT DATE/TIME: \_\_\_\_\_ INCIDENT CASE#: \_\_\_\_\_ INCIDENT LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYEES INVOLVED (IF KNOWN): \_\_\_\_\_

WITNESSES: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

THE FOLLOWING HAPPENED: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

CALIFORNIA PENAL CODE SECTION 148.6(a)(2): Any law enforcement agency accepting an allegation of misconduct against a peace officer shall require the complainant to read and sign the following information advisory, all in boldface type: YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE A COMPLAINT AGAINST A POLICE OFFICER FOR ANY IMPROPER POLICE CONDUCT. CALIFORNIA LAW REQUIRES THIS AGENCY TO HAVE A PROCEDURE TO INVESTIGATE CITIZENS' COMPLAINTS. YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO A WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF THIS PROCEDURE. THIS AGENCY MAY FIND AFTER INVESTIGATION THAT THERE IS NOT ENOUGH EVIDENCE TO WARRANT ACTION ON YOUR COMPLAINT. EVEN IF THAT IS THE CASE, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE THE COMPLAINT AND HAVE IT INVESTIGATED IF YOU BELIEVE AN OFFICER BEHAVED IMPROPERLY. CITIZEN COMPLAINTS AND ANY REPORTS OR FINDINGS RELATING TO COMPLAINTS MUST BE RETAINED BY THIS AGENCY FOR AT LEAST FIVE YEARS. IT IS AGAINST THE LAW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT THAT YOU KNOW TO BE FALSE. IF YOU MAKE A COMPLAINT AGAINST AN OFFICER KNOWING THAT IT IS FALSE, YOU CAN BE PROSECUTED ON A MISDEMEANOR CHARGE.

**About the Sunnyvale  
Department of Public Safety**

Sunnyvale’s Department of Public Safety is comprised of approximately 210 sworn Public Safety Officers. Public Safety Officers train and work as both police officers and fire fighters. Each day the Department offers professional police and fire services to a residential population of 131,700 and to businesses employing an additional 100,000 people.

In an average year, the Department responds to more than 100,000 calls for service. These calls for service include police situations, fire emergency calls and emergency medical assistance. The combined yearly police and fire incidents generate over 22,600 reports. Law enforcement activities result in more than 4,000 arrests and over 9,000 citations issued.

In addition to the daily Fire and Police Field Operations, the Department operates an Investigations Bureau, Traffic Enforcement Unit, SWAT Team, Community Services Bureau, Fire and Environmental Services Bureau, Dispatch/Communications Division and a large staff of civilian support personnel.

It is through the efforts of all Public Safety employees that the City of Sunnyvale enjoys one of the lowest crime rates in the nation among cities of comparable size.

During the course of their duties, Public Safety employees interact with the public on all levels and in a wide variety of situations.

We are pleased to report that in a typical year, fewer than 20 of these public contacts result in some kind of citizen complaint.

**SUNNYVALE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**



**Citizen’s Guide to Making  
Inquiries, Complaints and  
Commendations**

The Department of Public Safety is committed to providing high quality police and fire services to the community. In order to be responsive to community needs, it is necessary to have citizen input.

The Sunnyvale Department of Public Safety encourages recommendations from the public on ways to improve our services. We welcome commendations for personnel who perform their duties exceptionally well and encourage inquiries and complaints about questionable performance, actions, policies or procedures.

Your constructive comments about our service will help us maintain our high level of service and foster a healthy relationship with the community.

Don Johnson  
**Director of Public Safety**

# How to make a Citizen's Inquiry, Complaint or Commendation

An Inquiry, Complaint or Commendation can be made by any of the following methods:

- Fill out the attached mailer and send to:

Department of Public Safety  
Office of the Director  
P.O. Box 3707  
Sunnyvale, CA 94088-3707

- Call the hotline at (408) 524-COPS
- In person at Public Safety Headquarters.
- Desk officer at (408) 730-7110
- FAX at (408) 730-5713
- E-Mail to: [djohnson@ci.sunnyvale.ca.us](mailto:djohnson@ci.sunnyvale.ca.us)

- Website form at:  
[http:// sunnyvale.ca.gov/departments/public+safety](http://sunnyvale.ca.gov/departments/public+safety)

## Commending Exceptional Performance

Recognition of exceptional performance is also a valuable component of the citizen feedback process. Commendations, either verbal or written, are one of the best ways you can let someone know that you appreciate their good work.

Commendations received by the Director of Public Safety are forwarded to the employee with a copy placed in his or her personnel file. Your commendation will also be posted on the Department's bulletin board to be read by all employees. Although our employees don't expect to be thanked for everything they do, recognition of exceptional service is always nice. This kind of feedback helps us to know if we are doing a good job.

# The Citizen's Inquiry and Complaint Process

## What is a Citizen's Inquiry?

A Citizen's Inquiry is any contact with a citizen in reference to an issue of concern that does not require a formal investigation. The Citizen's Inquiry process seeks to resolve the issue at an informal level, to the satisfaction of the citizen, by means of discussion, explanation or clarification. Citizen's Inquiries are generally handled by an on-duty supervisor. All Citizen Inquiries are documented and forwarded to the Director of Public Safety for review. A Citizen's Inquiry that is not resolved can become a Citizen's Complaint.

## What is a Citizen's Complaint?

A Citizen's Complaint is a formal documentation involving:

1. a complaint against personnel
2. a complaint against Department policy or procedure

which was not resolved at the Citizen's Inquiry level or because of the nature of the allegation, may require an administrative and/or criminal investigation.

All Citizen's Complaints are forwarded to the Director of Public Safety for review. The Director of Public Safety will then assign the Complaint to the appropriate investigator for follow-up. The investigation will usually include a review of all applicable reports, policies and procedures, examination of any evidence or medical records and interviews with all parties and witnesses.

## How long will it take?

A simple complaint might take only a day to complete, while a complex complaint might take several months to investigate and review. You will be notified by mail every 30 days on the progress of the Investigation.

## What will happen at the end of the investigation?

The Director of Public Safety reviews every Inquiry and Complaint. If the Director determines that an employee violated Department policy or procedures, appropriate corrective action will be taken. The Director's review will also include looking for ways to improve policies, procedures and training.

The Director of Public Safety will also review the Complaint and findings with the City Manager. This review is to assure that the investigation was handled thoroughly and objectively.

At the end of the investigation, you will receive written notification of the Director's findings. State Law prohibits us from releasing specific details concerning personnel actions.

## Notification of Findings

You will receive written notification of the Director's findings.

### Personnel complaint findings:

1. **Sustained-** The allegation made in the complaint was proven.
2. **Not Sustained-** The investigation failed to prove or disprove the allegation.
3. **Unfounded-** The investigation shows that the alleged act did not occur.
4. **Exonerated-** The investigation shows that the alleged act did occur, but was justified, lawful and proper under the circumstances.
5. **No Finding-** Insufficient information available to conduct investigation.

### Policy/Procedural findings:

In complaints against Department policy/procedures, the Director may find that the policy or procedure is either:

1. appropriate as written OR
2. is in need of revision

Complaints sustained against policy/procedures will be sustained against the Department and not the officer involved.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR  
P.O. BOX 3707  
SUNNYVALE CA. 94088-3707

